

June 2014



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## Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County FSA NH Updates

### Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County FSA Office

The Concord Center  
10 Ferry Street, Box/Suite 212  
Concord, NH 03301

Phone: 603-223-6003  
Fax: 603-223-6030  
[www.fsa.usda.gov/NH](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/NH)  
Hours:  
Monday-Friday  
8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

County Executive Director:  
Donna Juneau  
[donna.juneau@nh.usda.gov](mailto:donna.juneau@nh.usda.gov)

### 2014 ACREAGE REPORTING DATES

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit the Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Merrimack, Belknap and Hillsborough Counties.

November 15, 2013 – Perennial Forage, Fall Forage Seeding, Fall-Seeded Small Grains  
January 2, 2014 – Honey  
January 15, 2014 - Apples, Peaches, Nectarines  
February 15, 2014 - Maple Sap  
May 31, 2014 – Ornamental Nursery  
**July 15, 2014 – Corn, Fresh Market Sweet Corn, Spring Forage Seeding, All**

603-223-6003

Program Technicians:

Melinda Marston

[melinda.marston@nh.usda.gov](mailto:melinda.marston@nh.usda.gov)

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NH Farm Loan Manager:

Brian Kuper

[brian.kuper@vt.usda.gov](mailto:brian.kuper@vt.usda.gov)

603-223-6003

NH Farm Loan Officers:

Lorna Wakefield

Rebecca Davis

William Wilson

NH Farm Loan Program

Technician:

Sandra Carter

County Committee Members:

Martha Crete, Chair

Robert Potter Jr., Vice-Chair

William Hall Jr., Member

Eric Tenney, Member

Jane Presby, Member

Next County Committee

Meeting: July 22, 2014

at 7 pm - USDA Conference

Room 211

## Other Crops

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of "cover only," "green manure," "left standing," or "seed," then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

**A late file fee will not be assessed for any 2014 crops with a final reporting date on or after October 1, 2013. The late file fee will be waived until December 31, 2014.**

Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) policy holders should note that the acreage reporting date for NAP covered crops is the earlier of the dates listed above or 15 calendar days before grazing or harvesting of the crop begins.

For questions regarding crop certification and crop loss reports, please contact the Merrimack-Belknap-Hillsborough County FSA Office 24 hours a day by sending us a fax, an e-mail, or leaving a voice mail message. Our office phone number is 223-6003; our fax number is 223-6030; and our office e-mail is [MBHCountyFSA@nh.usda.gov](mailto:MBHCountyFSA@nh.usda.gov)

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## ATTENTION FARM LOAN BORROWERS - IMPORTANCE OF RECORD KEEPING

Business planning and record keeping are an essential part of business management. Every good business person must keep accurate books and the business must be profitable to exist.

Well-kept Farm Business Records will provide you with:

1. Information to complete your Federal and State income tax returns and W-2s.
2. How much money you received during the year.
3. How much it costs to operate your business.
4. How much it costs your family to live.
5. What and how much you produced and if you made a profit.
6. Whether or not the amount you produced was as much as you had projected.
7. What was spent toward capital improvements.
8. The amount of money you paid toward your loan and other debts during the year.
9. Which enterprises are profitable.
10. Whether or not a change in next year's business is necessary to obtain the desired objectives.
11. Information needed for lenders to make the right credit decisions.

Plans developed and discussed with your lender could help you increase the

financial success of your business.

You can obtain a number of forms on line including a Farm Business Plan - Balance Sheet (FSA-2037) at:

<http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/efcommon/eFileServices/eForms/FSA2037.PDF> ;

Farm Business Plan - Projected/Actual Income and Expense (FSA-2038) at:

<http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/efcommon/eFileServices/eForms/FSA2038.PDF> ;

and Farm Business Plan - Summary of Year's Business (FSA-2039)

at: <http://forms.sc.egov.usda.gov/efcommon/eFileServices/eForms/FSA2039.PDF>

OR stop by or call the FSA County Office at 223-6003 for hard copies of these forms in a Farm Business Record Book.

Remember you can always contact your lender if you need assistance or have questions about how to fill out any financial statements.

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## COUNTY COMMITTEE (COC) ELECTIONS LAA 3 & LAA 5: NOMINATIONS OPEN JUNE 15, 2014

The election of agricultural producers to Farm Service Agency (FSA) county committees is important to ALL farmers and ranchers. It is crucial that every eligible producer participate in these elections because FSA county committees are a link between the agricultural community and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

County committee members are a critical component of the operations of FSA. They help deliver FSA farm programs at the local level. Farmers and ranchers who serve on county committees help with the decisions necessary to administer the programs in their counties. They work to ensure FSA agricultural programs serve the needs of local producers.

FSA county committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws. County committee members are elected to a three year term. They apply their judgment and knowledge to make local decisions

The COC nomination period runs from June 15, 2014 through August 1, 2014. Agricultural producers who participate or cooperate in an FSA program may be nominated for candidacy for the county committee. Individuals may nominate themselves or others as a candidate. Additionally, organizations representing minority and women farmers or ranchers may nominate candidates. Nomination forms are filed for the county committee of the office that administers a producer's farm records. To become a nominee, eligible individuals must sign nomination form FSA-669A. The form includes a statement that the nominee agrees to serve if elected. This form is available at USDA Service Centers and online at [www.fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections).

**This year, COC elections will be taking place for two Local Administrative Areas: LAA 3 and LAA 5. Towns within LAA 3 include:** Allenstown, Belmont, Bow, Canterbury, Chichester, Concord, Epsom, Hooksett, Loudon, Northfield, Pembroke, Pittsfield. **Towns included in LAA 5 are:** Amherst, Bedford, Brookline, Greenville, Hollis, Hudson, Litchfield, Lyndeborough, Mason, Merrimack, Milford, Nashua, New Ipswich, Pelham, Peterborough, Sharon, Temple, Wilton.

For more information contact your local FSA office.

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## USDA AWARDING \$6 MILLION TO PREPARE FARMERS FOR NEW FARM BILL PROGRAMS

USDA is awarding \$6 million to universities and cooperative state extension services to develop online decision tools and other materials and train experts to educate producers about several key farm bill programs. The new Web tools will help farmers and ranchers determine what participation in programs established by the 2014 Farm

Bill will mean for their businesses.

The University of Illinois (lead for the National Coalition for Producer Education), along with the Food and Agricultural Policy Research Institute (FAPRI) at the University of Missouri and the Agricultural and Food Policy Center at Texas A&M (co-leads for the National Association of Agricultural and Food Policy), will receive a total of \$3 million to develop the new online tools and train state-based extension agents who can in turn help educate farmers.

The new resources will help farmers and ranchers make an educated choice between the new Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) program and the Price Loss Coverage (PLC) program. Using the new online tools, producers will be able to use data unique to their specific farming operations combined with factors like the geographical diversity of crops, soils, weather and climates across the country to test a variety of financial scenarios before officially signing up for the new program options later this year. Once a producer enrolls in the ARC or PLC program, he or she must remain in the program through the 2018 crop year.

New tools will be provided for other programs as well. Sign-up for the newly established Margin Protection Program for Dairy (MPP) begins late this summer and enrollment for "buy-up" provisions under the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) will begin early next year. An online MPP tool will be available when sign up begins and the NAP buy-up provision resource will become available to producers in the fall for the 2015 crop year.

USDA will also award \$3 million to state cooperative extension services—a nationwide network of experts based at land-grant universities—for outreach and education on the new Farm Bill programs. Funds will be used to conduct public education outreach meetings where producers can speak with local extension agents and Farm Service Agency (FSA) staff. Outreach meetings will begin late this summer to help farmers and ranchers understand the new programs and their options.

While universities work to create new online tools, producers now have access to a preliminary website that gives them a chance to begin familiarizing themselves with the new programs and the type of information they will need to consider when deciding which program options work better for them. At this site, farmers and ranchers can view ARC and PLC projected payments, ARC guarantees, and PLC payment rate projections. These tables are available on the FSA [FSA website](#).

Visit [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov) or the local FSA office for information about FSA and the 2014 Farm Bill programs.

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## **USDA'S FARM SERVICE AGENCY (FSA) OFFERS FARM BILL WEBSITE AND ONLINE OVERVIEW OF FARM BILL PROGRAMS**

The Agricultural Act of 2014 (the Act), also known as the 2014 Farm Bill, was signed by President Obama on Feb. 7, 2014. The Act repeals certain programs, continues some programs with modifications, and authorizes several new programs administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). Most of these programs are authorized and funded through 2018.

For the latest on 2014 Farm Bill programs administered by FSA, please visit our Farm Bill website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/farmbill) and for an FSA program overview please read, download and/or print our recently posted FSA Farm Bill Fact Sheet titled, [What's in the 2014 Farm Bill for Farm Service Agency Customers?](#)

For more information on FSA, please contact your local USDA Service Center or visit us online at [www.fsa.usda.gov](http://www.fsa.usda.gov).

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## **NEW FARM BILL OFFERS INCREASED OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRODUCERS**

The 2014 Farm Bill offers increased opportunities for producers including farm loan program modifications that

create flexibility for new and existing farmers. A fact sheet outlining modifications to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Farm Service Agency (FSA) Farm Loan Programs is available [here](#).

The Farm Bill expands lending opportunities for thousands of farmers and ranchers to begin and continue operations, including greater flexibility in determining eligibility, raising loan limits, and emphasizing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers.

Changes that will take effect immediately include:

- Elimination of the 15 year term limit for guaranteed operating loans.
- Modification of the definition of beginning farmer, using the average farm size for the county as a qualifier instead of the median farm size.
- Modification of the Joint Financing Direct Farm Ownership Interest Rate to 2 percent less than regular Direct Farm Ownership rate, with a floor of 2.5 percent. Previously, the rate was established at 5 percent.
- Increase of the maximum loan amount for Direct Farm Ownership Down Payment Loan Program from \$225,000 to \$300,000.
- Elimination of rural residency requirement for Youth Loans, allowing urban youth to benefit.
- Debt forgiveness on Youth Loans, which will not prevent borrowers from obtaining additional loans from the federal government.
- Increase of the guaranteed percentage on Conservation Loans from 75 to 80 percent and 90 percent for socially disadvantaged borrowers and beginning farmers.
- Microloans will not count toward direct operating loan term limits for veterans and beginning farmers.

Additional modifications must be implemented through the rulemaking processes. Visit the [FSA Farm Bill website](#) for detailed information and updates to farm loan programs.

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## **USDA ANNOUNCES CHANGES TO FRUIT, VEGETABLE AND WILD RICE PLANTING RULES**

Farm Service Agency (FSA) has announced fruit, vegetable and wild rice provisions that affect producers who intend to participate in certain programs authorized by the Agricultural Act of 2014.

Producers who intend to participate in the Agriculture Risk Coverage (ARC) or Price Loss Coverage (PLC) programs are subject to an acre-for-acre payment reduction when fruits and nuts, vegetables or wild rice are planted on the payment acres of a farm. Payment reductions do not apply to mung beans, dry peas, lentils or chickpeas. Planting fruits, vegetables or wild rice on acres that are not considered payment acres will not result in a payment reduction. Farms that are eligible to participate in ARC/PLC but are not enrolled for a particular year may plant unlimited fruits, vegetables and wild rice for that year but will not receive ARC/PLC payments for that year. Eligibility for succeeding years is not affected.

Planting and harvesting fruits, vegetables and wild rice on ARC/PLC acreage is subject to the acre-for-acre payment reduction when those crops are planted on either more than 15 percent of the base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the county coverage or PLC, or more than 35 percent of the base acres of a farm enrolled in ARC using the individual coverage.

Fruits, vegetables and wild rice that are planted in a double-cropping practice will not cause a payment reduction if the farm is in a double-cropping region as designated by the USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation.

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## **USDA FARM SERVICE AGENCY ANNOUNCES TREE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TAP) SIGN-UP**

As of Tuesday, April 15, 2014, orchardists and nursery tree growers who experienced losses from natural disasters that occurred on or after Oct. 1, 2011, can sign up for the Tree Assistance Program (TAP). TAP was authorized by

the Agricultural Act of 2014 as a permanent disaster program. TAP provides financial assistance to qualifying orchardists and nursery tree growers to replant or rehabilitate eligible trees, bushes and vines damaged by natural disasters.

Eligible tree types include trees, bushes or vines that produce an annual crop for commercial purposes. Nursery trees include ornamental, fruit, nut and Christmas trees that are produced for commercial sale. Trees used for pulp or timber are ineligible.

To qualify for TAP, orchardists must suffer a qualifying tree, bush or vine loss in excess of 15 percent mortality from an eligible natural disaster. The eligible trees, bushes or vines must have been owned when the natural disaster occurred; however, eligible growers are not required to own the land on which the eligible trees, bushes and vines were planted.

If the TAP application is approved, the eligible trees, bushes and vines must be replaced within 12 months from the date the application is approved. The cumulative total quantity of acres planted to trees, bushes or vines, for which a producer can receive TAP payments, cannot exceed 500 acres annually.

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## **LIVESTOCK DISASTER ASSISTANCE SIGN-UP UNDERWAY**

Livestock disaster program enrollment opened on April 15, 2014. These disaster programs are authorized by the 2014 Farm Bill as permanent programs and provide retroactive authority to cover losses that occurred on or after Oct. 1, 2011.

To expedite applications, all producers who experienced losses are encouraged to bring records documenting those losses to their local FSA Office. Producers should record all pertinent information of natural disaster consequences, including:

- Documentation of the number and kind of livestock that have died, supplemented if possible by photographs or video records of ownership and losses
- Dates of death supported by birth recordings or purchase receipts
- Costs of transporting livestock to safer grounds or to move animals to new pastures
- Feed purchases if supplies or grazing pastures are destroyed
- Crop records, including seed and fertilizer purchases, planting and production records

Eligible producers can sign-up for the following livestock disaster assistance programs:

### Livestock Forage Disaster Program (LFP):

LFP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered grazing losses due to drought on privately owned or cash leased land or fire on federally managed land. Eligible producers must physically be located in a county affected by a qualifying drought during the normal grazing period for the county. Producers who suffered eligible grazing losses should submit a completed CCC-853 and supporting documentation by January 30, 2015.

### Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP):

LIP provides compensation to eligible livestock producers that have suffered livestock death losses in excess of normal mortality due to adverse weather and attacks by animals reintroduced into the wild by the federal government or protected by federal law. Producers who suffered livestock death losses should submit a notice of loss and an application for payment to their local FSA office by January 30, 2015.

### Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honeybees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP)

ELAP provides emergency assistance to eligible producers of livestock, honeybees and farm-raised fish that have losses due to disease, adverse weather, or other conditions, such as blizzards and wildfires. ELAP assistance is provided for losses not covered by LFP and LIP. Producers who suffered eligible livestock, honeybee or farm-raised fish losses during 2012 and 2013 program years must submit a notice of loss and application for payment to their local FSA office by August 1, 2014. For 2014 program year losses, the notice of loss and an application for payment must be submitted by November 1, 2014.

For more information, producers can review the LFP, LIP and ELAP Fact Sheets on the [Farm Bill webpage](#). Producers are encouraged to make an appointment with their local FSA office to apply for these programs.

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## **SAVE TIME – MAKE AN APPOINTMENT WITH FSA**

As we roll out the Farm Bill programs administered by FSA, there will be related signups and in some cases multiple management decisions that need to be made by you, the producer, in consult with FSA staff. To insure maximum use of your time and to insure that you are afforded our full attention to your important business needs, please call our office ahead of your visit to set an appointment and to discuss any records or documentation that you may need to have with you when you arrive for your appointment. For local FSA Service Center contact information, please visit: <http://offices.sc.egov.usda.gov/locator/app>.

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## **SELECTED INTEREST RATES FOR JUNE 2014:**

Farm Operating Loans (including microloans) - Direct 2.25%  
Farm Ownership Loans - Direct 4.00%  
Farm Ownership- Direct, Joint Financing - 2.50%  
Farm Ownership Loans — Direct Down Payment, Beginning Farmer or Rancher - 1.50%  
Emergency Loan - 3.25%  
Farm Storage Facility Loans (7 years) - 2.25%

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## **DATES TO REMEMBER:**

June 15, 2014 - Nomination Period Opens for COC Elections in LAA 3 & LAA 5  
July 4, 2014 - Independence Day Federal Holiday - Office Closed  
July 22, 2014 - COC meeting at 7 pm in the USDA Conference, room 211  
July 15, 2014 - Acreage Reporting Deadline for Corn, Fresh Market Sweet Corn, Spring Forage Seeding, Other Crops\* (see article)  
August 1, 2014 - Last Day to Submit COC Nomination Form (received by FSA local office or postmarked by August 1st)

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USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (866) 632-9992 (Toll-free Customer Service), (800) 877-8339 (Local or Federal relay), (866) 377-8642 (Relay voice users).

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